

Saying Goodbye

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Summary: A relationship crumbles into dust before their eyes.

Saying Goodbye

****A/N:** I know this isn't exactly a TNG fic, but Beverly and Deanna do make an appearance in it, and it is set loosely in that universe. Originally posted over on Tumblr, and the lyrics are from Skillet's Not Gonna Die.**

Death surrounds

>My heartbeat's slowing down

Blinding white hides the world from her eyes as she falls backwards, her body buring with the pain that runs like a wild fire through her veins. Somewhere at the back of her mind, she registers the smell of burning flesh, of someone screaming her name - Tarja! No! - as her back collides with hard red sandstone. A cloud of dust rises up around her, making her eyes sting and water through the thin slits of her eyelids that refuse to close all the way. The sound of her own breath seems to roar in her ears, like the way a waterfall doesas it crashes over the edge of a shining black cliff face into the drop pool below.

This is how it feels when you're bent and broken

>This is how it feels when your dignity is stolen
When everything you love is leaving_

She crumbles onto her knees by the prone form with the gaping hole in their chest. Tears streak across her cheeks as rest dust clings to her clothes, taints her hair a shade of reddish-brown that only comes naturally to those lucky enough to have the right genes.

Black mascara lines marr her pale face, fall from the curve of her jaw to mark the skirt of the light white-blue dress she'd chosen to

wear today. Her hand trembles as she reaches out to push a black strand of hair away from an elfen face with lips that are slowly beginning to turn blue and eyes that are starting to slow in their feeble, struggling movements behind closed lids.

Ragged breathing becomes more laboured. The rise and fall of an incomplete chest is slowing down, with each rise accompanied by the faint gurgle of what can only be fluid in the lungs - probably blood - and there's a sense of pain that comes with seeing each breath being drawn into drowning lungs, like each one is harder to draw than the last.

And as you push away the guilt, you can't help but think - Maybe it would be for the best if she just â€| gave in.

_The last thing I heard was you whispering goodbye
>And then I heard you flatline

You see her sat by the woman's - Tarja, you remind yourself - side, her hand curled around limp fingers that will never again return the pressure of the tight grip that holds them. A small, portable heart monitor reads the slowly fading heartbeat of your patient, she'll be gone soon - swept up into the darkness of death, and you wonder what the name of the woman that kneels above her is.

You've seen her before, greeted her in passing in the halls, and you wander - should you know her? should you be able to place her face, connect it with a name that's been long since forgotten in some dark recess at the back of your mind?

You start when you feel a hand touch your elbow, turn to see Deanna's dark eyes looking up at you. "Her name's Sharon," she offers, her eyes filled with a soul-sucking sadness despite the fact that there's a faint smile turning up the corner of her lips. Black irises turn away, and you follow her gaze back to them. "They've been dating a few months now."

She doesn't say anymore, and as you watch, you imagine that you can hear a different ending to that sentence - But I think there's something really special there.

There's a faint movement of blue lips - a name, a word or two, an incoherent sound, a rushing, gasping, desperate breath or just plain silence, you cannot tell - and then the schreeching wail of the heart monitor as the fading pulse of the heart it's tracking dies away completely. You watch with Deanna at your side as she seems to curl forwards over the lifeless body, almost collapsing in on herself as her shoulders tremble and her body is racked with silent sobs.

A hand fills the one hanging by your side, and you squeeze her fingers, feeling how the metal of the wedding band that adorns her finger is cool, comforting, against your skin. You close your eyes, lean into her small frame and tilt you head until red-blonde hair mingles with black corkscrew curls, your head against hers, and you let yourself shed a single tear for the life of someone you could've known, for the friend you could've had.

And for the life of a woman that'll never be the same again.

End
file.